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## The Midwife.

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### BABY VOLONSKY.\*

It is very hard to be so little that you cannot talk! Baby Volonsky knows all about it. At first he did not mind very much. He was comfortable, rolled up tightly in his warm blanket and shawls, and all he wanted to do was to sleep or to look up at the big feather bed piled up all around him. And then, whenever he cried, his mother would give him his good dinner and he would go to sleep again.

But one day he woke up feeling very uncomfortable. He began to cry, for that was the only way he had of telling his mother about it, and she hurriedly took him up and gave him his dinner. But this time his dinner did not seem to make him feel any better. He had a pain in his little stomach and his head felt very big and heavy, and oh! he was so warm—so he cried some more, and his father took him up and bounced him up and down.

He didn't like that at all, but he was so dazed by it that he stopped crying, until his father laid him down again, and then he drew up his little feet and tried to tell his mother how miserable he felt, but somehow she didn't seem to understand and just gave him more dinner. This time he wouldn't take it, but turned his little head away and cried feebly, for it did seem so hard that his own mother didn't understand him or know what he wanted.

After that, things kept getting worse. He was so hot in his tightly rolled blankets, his little stomach felt as though it was all ache, and his head felt so queer and big and hurt him so that he just kept his eyes half closed and moaned, for he was too tired and hot to cry any more. Sometimes his mother would come and stand over him, looking so worried and puzzled, and then she would take him up and try the old comforter—his dinner—but she soon found that he wouldn't take it any more, so finally she just let him lie in her lap and occasionally gave little bounces and jolts that made his poor little head feel worse than ever.

Finally, one day, a lady in a cool-looking blue dress came and stood over him, and looked at him for a long time. Then she took him in her arms—oh, so gently! that it didn't hurt his head one little bit. She laid him on her lap and began to take off the blankets and shawls and clothes that were pinned around him. Then

she put him in his mother's dishpan. At first Baby Volonsky didn't like that, the water felt so cold to him and it frightened him to be lying there without any flannel pinned tightly around him. But in a few minutes the water began to feel pleasant to his hot, burning skin, and when the lady in the blue dress took him out of the bath and began to softly rub his little body, he felt more comfortable than he had felt for days. She rubbed his little back and his little chest and sprinkled some cool, white powder on them, which made the prickles feel so good, and then she did the same thing to his arms and legs. At last, she put a cool, loose dress on him, gave him a drink of water out of a spoon, laid him on a pillow on his mother's bed and the first thing Baby Volonsky knew he was sleeping quietly and dreaming of cool, blue dresses and splashing water. After that, he felt better and when he awoke and his mother offered him a little dinner he took some, but he didn't like it very much and was happier just to lie still.

The next day the lady in blue came to see him again. This time she talked a long time to his mother, and finally his mother put her old shawl over her head, and, taking Baby Volonsky in her arms, went with the blue lady out of the door and into the sunlight. They walked for a long distance and finally went into a big house and a big room, where lots of other little babies were sitting in their mothers' laps. Then the lady in blue gave him to another lady in blue, and she took off all his little clothes and laid him naked in a queer little cradle that moved up and down. Then a big man in a white coat took him in his arms and felt him and poked him, and talked to his mother, and then they put his clothes on again and all went back to his own home.

But since that day, everything has been different for Baby Volonsky. In the first place, it doesn't matter how much he cries, his mother doesn't give him his dinner except just so often. Sometimes it seems a long time to wait, but then when he gets it, it does taste so good, and he always goes to sleep afterwards.

Then, too, his mother seems to understand him so much better. Sometimes, when he cries, she seems to know that he is thirsty and gives him a nice cool drink of water; or that he is hot and takes off a blanket; or perhaps a pin is pricking him, and if he cries very loud she is

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